ED 423 089 WISDOM SITS IN PLACES: LANDSCAPE AND LANGUAGE AMONG THE WESTERN APACHE.

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ABSTRACT

This book of essays draws on a cultural geography project in which an ethnographer and Apache consultants mapped the area around Cibecue, on the Fort Apache Reservation (Arizona). The essays focus on different Apache individuals and examine the ways that Apache constructions of place reach deeply into other cultural spheres. Many Apache place names evoke vivid images of places, and since these names were given by the ancestors as they explored and settled the land, they provide a path by which local people may reconstruct, imagine, and draw meaning from the past. A name that no longer matches a place's appearance provides evidence of environmental change over time and further material for local historical interpretation. Clan names are based on these descriptive names. Other place names allude to historical events that illuminate causes and consequences of wrongful social conduct. These names are linked to traditional stories used to instruct young people and admonish those who transgress social rules. So tight is the link between place and story that both are said to "stalk" transgressors, causing them to attend to "living right" every time they see the place or imagine it in their mind. This linkage between place, name, and story promotes a form of discourse called "speaking with names," a subtle conversational practice that exploits the evocative power of place names to comment tactfully, with few words, on others' moral conduct. The final essay outlines Apache conceptions of wisdom, the qualities of mind that the seeker of wisdom must cultivate, and the crucial role of knowledge of places and sense of place in the attainment of wisdom. (Contains 101 references, notes, and an index.) (SV)

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